

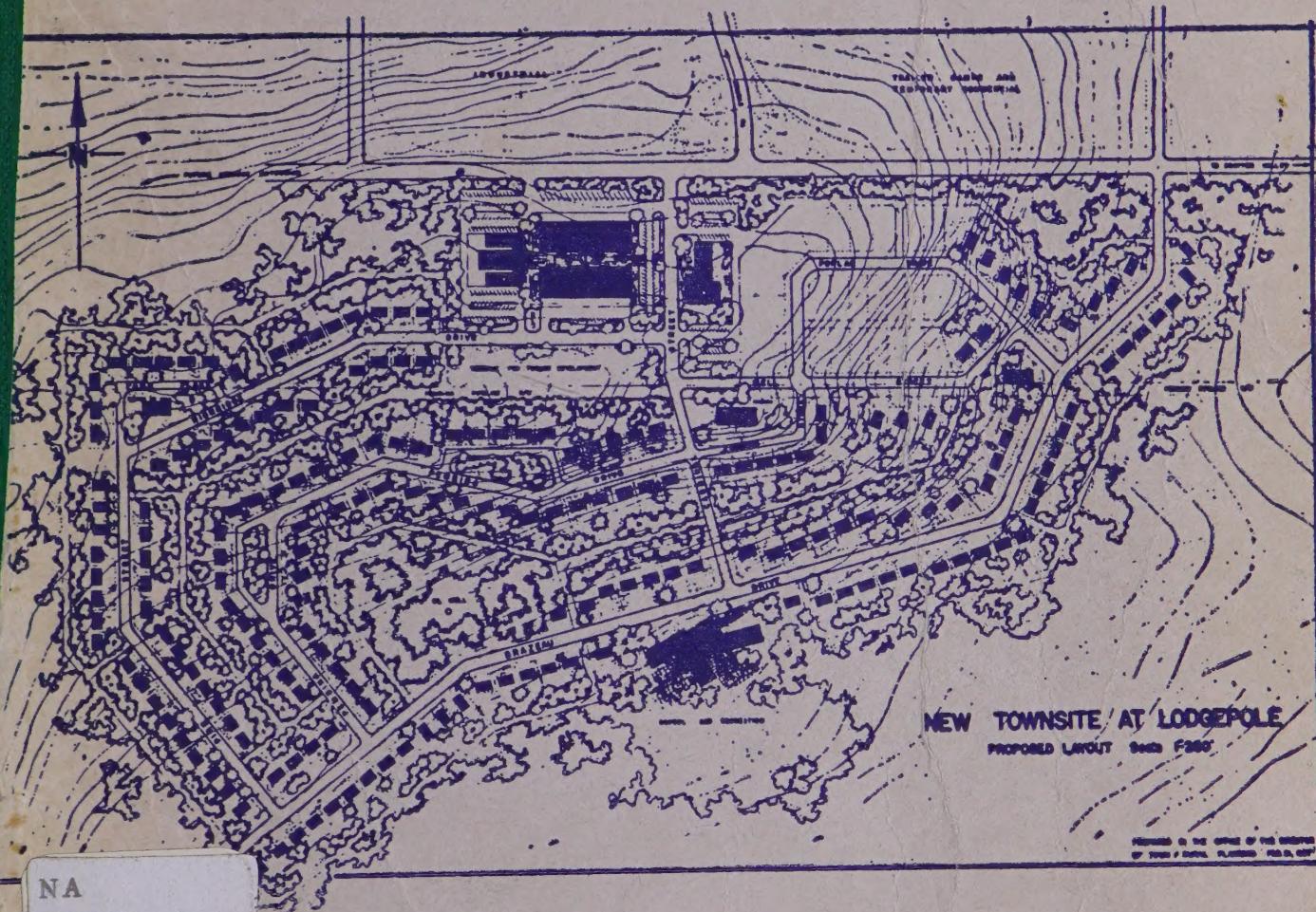
University Of Alberta



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# COMMUNITY PLANNING

*A Project in Community Economics*



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## COMMUNITY PLANNING

When no one is consulted plans are foiled,  
When many are consulted, they succeed.

PROVERBS 15:22.

Is there an open space close to your home where you can play baseball, football, and other athletic activities?

Does your Dad complain about traffic tie-ups and parking conditions?

Do you have to cross railroad tracks, highways, or busy thoroughfares on your way to school?

Do people in your community complain because businesses or industries have been located next to houses?

The above questions suggest some of the problems encountered in living in towns and cities today. These problems are the result of unplanned growth of our communities. Town and city officials today are striving to overcome their local difficulties and are attempting to re-plan their communities, sometimes at great cost. In this unit we will discuss some of their problems, and will try to show how these could have been avoided by proper planning.

When Canada was being settled by the French and English pioneers, they kept their land near or facing a river in order to have a water supply, and to have ready transportation. In Quebec, particularly, and through various localities in Canada, there are still long narrow "river lots" as they are called. Later, the land was surveyed and divided into townships, sections, and quarter sections. It was on these square quarter sections that many of our fathers or grandfathers spent the old "homestead days". As Canada gradually filled, railroads and highways supplanted the old pioneer trails. Hamlets, towns, and cities grew up at strategic terminal points, keeping their growth parallel to the river, railroad, highway or survey lines set up. In nearly all cases, growth was haphazard, so that towns and cities developed without any planned system, with business places, residences and industrial sites side by side, with streets that soon became inadequate for the volume of traffic. Thus problems were created.

So, like the community illustrated on the diagram on the following page, many towns had to face the consequences of lack of previous planning.

Study this diagram of an "unplanned" imaginary town. Can you list ten errors in planning to be found in the diagram?

Your answers to the above questions will suggest some of the problems encountered in living in towns and cities today. These problems are the result of the unplanned growth of our communities.

Today, many individuals and authorities realize the problems which have developed because of lack of planning in towns and cities. The October, 1955, issue of the "Commercial Letter", published by the Canadian Bank of Commerce, states, "It is an astonishing fact that, in a century dominated by the idea of productive efficiency, the uneconomic organization of our cities has caused so little concern. Today, however, there are signs that the cost of congestion, ribbon development and suburban sprawl is understood better than ever before and that the public's courage is being summoned to tackle the problem." Mr. C. E. Campeau, now Director of the Planning Department of Montreal, concluded that the loss from delays in trucking alone might be as high as \$30 million annually.

The problems resulting from unplanned growth are very real. In towns and cities, traffic congestion, lack of parking space, inadequate park areas, lack of zoning, are all making life less comfortable and more costly.

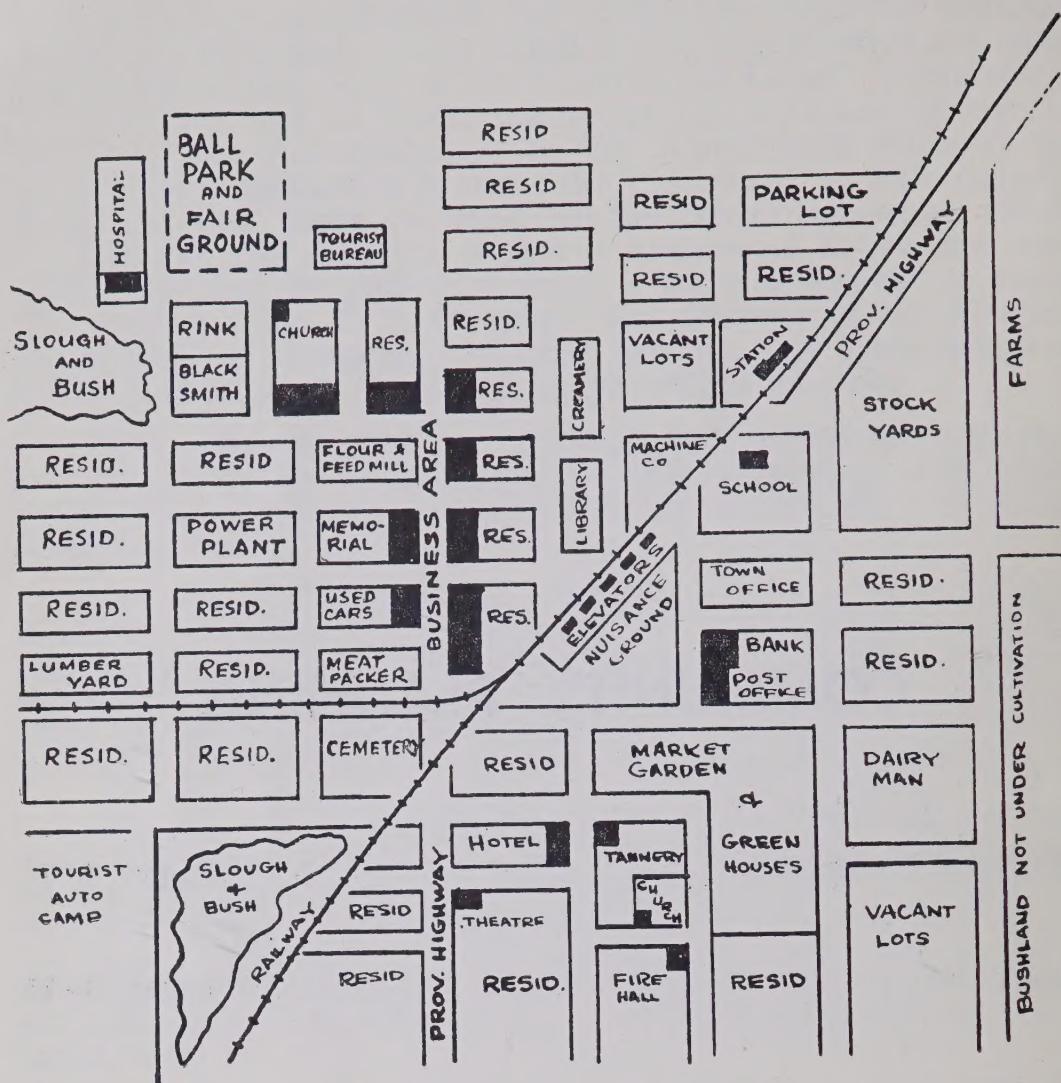
In rural areas surrounding hamlets, a process of re-planning is almost necessary. The development of the automobile and the construction of good roads have meant the death of many business stores within thirty or forty miles of large towns or cities. Automobiles and trucks enable rural people to market their produce, livestock and grains in larger centers, to the detriment of small towns.

In this unit we will examine some of the problems resulting from unplanned development, and will endeavor to suggest some possible solutions for them. As problems vary in different situations, we will classify the communities within this province into three types: the rural community, the town, and the city. Since the economic backbone of this province is agriculture, and since much of our population still lives in rural areas, we will investigate the rural community first.



# COMMUNITY PLANNING

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## THE RURAL COMMUNITY

Pleasant Hill is a farming community. It represents only one type of rural community where the houses are scattered over a wide area divided into sections or smaller holdings. In the center, approximately, is a small hamlet containing a store, school, garage, and two elevators. There aren't any public utilities such as water or electricity, nor is there any local government. In such a small community, everyone knows his neighbors quite well, people are friendly and generally unhurried. They work together in meeting their common everyday needs and have a feeling of close, intimate community pride. What need, then, is there for planning in a rural farming community such as Pleasant Hill?

At the turn of the century, when pioneers settled here, Alberta was divided into townships and sections. They usually started farming on a quarter section of land which was more than adequate, considering it had to be cleared and broken and worked over with

horses or oxen. The hamlet served their other needs as it was the right distance away for horse-and-buggy travel. There was very little call for law and order because the community bond of customs and intimacy seemed to keep things in order.

How, then, has Pleasant Hill changed? What forces are changing community life in and around Pleasant Hill?

There are several factors, or forces, which are affecting life in the rural community:

1. There is the scientific advancement which has produced vast amounts of machinery specifically designed to aid the farmer. These include trucks, combines, one-ways, bailers, electric milkers, and countless other items.
2. There is the desire to have the luxuries town and city people have, such as electricity to operate television sets, refrigerators, radios and stoves; modern plumbing and sanitation; more comfortable modern homes.
3. There is the desire for better education and health services.
4. There is the increased knowledge of new scientific agricultural practices.
5. There is the knowledge that farm cash income is, on the average, lower than city income; that opportunity and changes are not as easily attained by farmers.

These forces present problems to the hamlet and surrounding rural communities. The extent to which they are planned for and met will determine the growth or even the future existence of the community. To what extent should a farmer mechanize his farm? Can a young man starting on the land afford to purchase all the machinery required today in farming? In these days of competitive production, can he afford not to do so? Should the farmer join a rural electrification cooperative? To what extent can he afford to modernize his farmstead? How can the older farmer keep his sons on the land in spite of the beckoning of the higher wages in the city?

A community must be receptive to certain changes, indeed, must plan for them. We all have desires for certain things which may appear luxurious or even impractical. Yet, over a period of years, circumstances may change so that what was only a desire becomes a necessity. For instances, when Dad bought his first car, it was a luxury; but now it is so much a part of everyday life it has become a necessity. And so, other "desires" have similarly become "needs". A rural community which does not meet these ever-changing "needs" as dictated by the people will slowly die.

Now let us look at some of the problems that the forces we listed earlier have created for Pleasant Hill. The first, scientific advancement in the field of farm machinery, has greatly increased the acreage that one man may now plant and harvest. This means that fewer farm hands are needed, and that sometimes the farmer's sons

must leave home or buy out less fortunate farmers in order to stay in the rural community. The net effects are a steady exodus from the land by the young people and larger holdings by the more successful farmers. As a matter of fact, the successful farmer may rent his holdings and choose to live in the town or city in order to enjoy the added comfort of utilities and entertainment.

The second force listed earlier is not detrimental to rural living if the farmer is willing to wait a little longer than his city brethren for these luxuries to reach the country. However, the wife and children, perhaps he himself, may not be content to wait, and may move to an urban center.

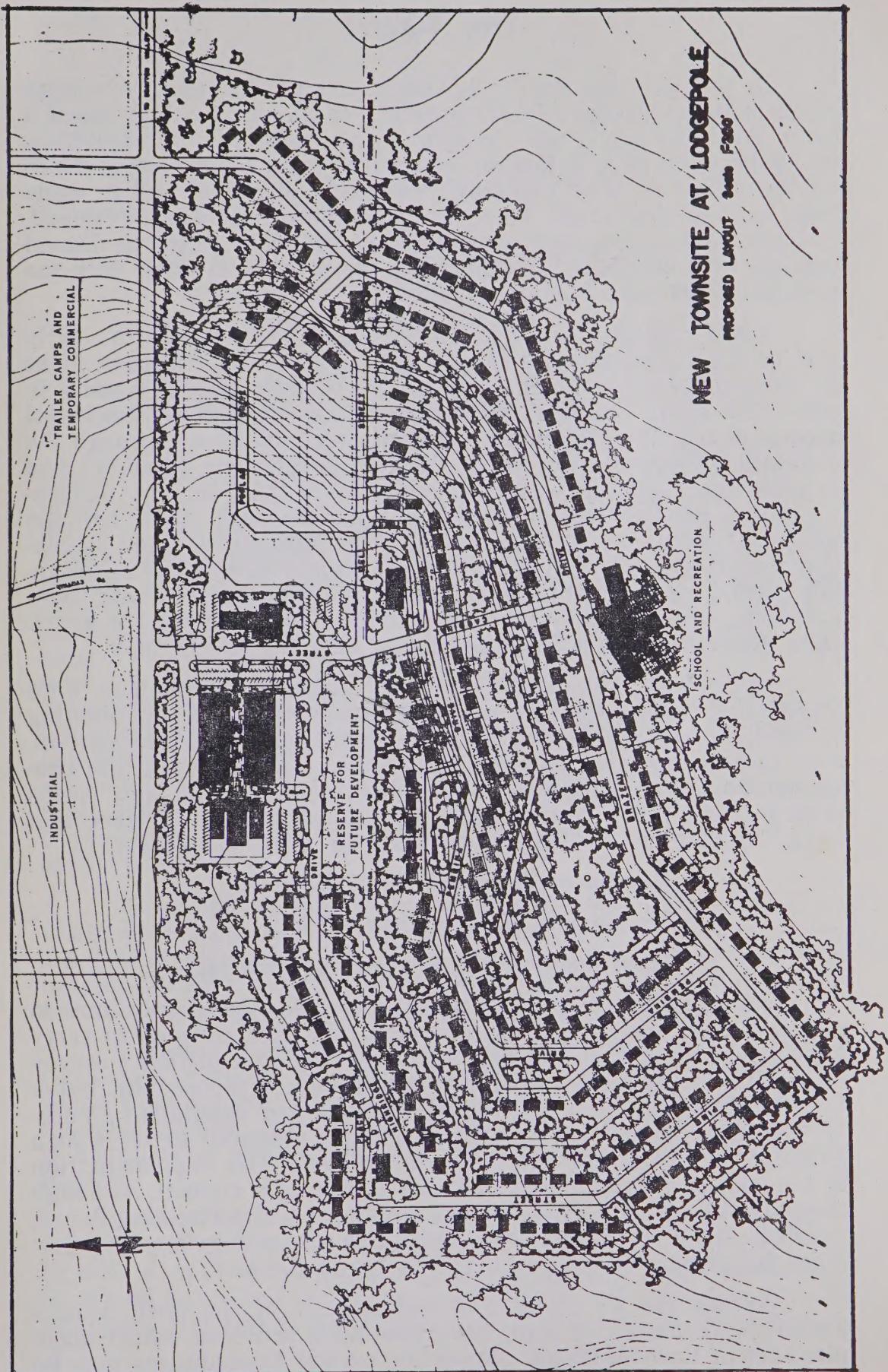
Similarly, the other forces will create other problems for which the rural community must plan solutions in order that the residents may live more fully and comfortably, and in some cases in order that the community center, that is the hamlet, may even survive.

#### **Assignments:**

1. What effect may forces 3 and 4 (see above) have on a rural farming community?
2. Try to anticipate the needs or desires which will arise in another twenty years at Pleasant Hill. What will be the effect on rural living of air travel, faster and larger farm machinery, new crops, etc.?
3. Choose a small mining hamlet for a study. Use the headings listed below for developing the study:

Location, layout (sections, township), history of development, customs, wants and needs, forces which are building or destroying the community.

4. List the services for which you go to the hamlet. List those services for which you go to other (presumably larger) centers.
5. (a) If you are living in a rural community make a diagram of it showing the outline and division into sections. Put on this diagram all the farm homes, and with different series of colored lines see whether they use the hamlet's various services such as the store, church, school, elevator, garage, etc. From the diagram you should get a general idea as to whether the hamlet or rural area is declining and whether something new is evolving.  
(b) What conclusions do you draw regarding the future of the hamlet? What factors will cause a hamlet to grow? What factors will cause a hamlet to decline?
6. Discuss or write an essay giving your opinions on the following statement: "The hamlet serving a long-established, strictly agricultural community is doomed to a slow decline."
7. Either through a discussion or an essay, present suggestions for counteracting the deterioration of rural community living.
8. To what extent are the needs of the rural community being met by the system of market roads, erection of power lines, and television reception?
9. How may roads, power lines, schools, etc., be planned to provide the best and most efficient service for rural communities?



## THE TOWN

In the introduction at the beginning of this unit, you were asked to list evidences of poor planning as shown in a diagram of a town. While no single town is such a mess as the one illustrated in the diagram on page 3, few towns are free from the problems which are the result of poor planning, haphazard planning, and in some cases no planning at all. To realize why these problems developed, we must consider again how towns grew. In order to try to discuss possible town planning for the future, we must be familiar with the past history of town planning in Alberta.

Town planning concepts in Alberta commenced in the early part of the twentieth century, partly as a result of European ideas on community development, and partly because people wanted to make their towns beautiful. Little thought was given to the functional aspects of planning. Planning was pretty well discarded through the depression years. During World War II, government planning was at a low ebb. However, with the emergence of the Dominion Government into housing with The National Housing Act, 1944, and the industrial boom here in Alberta during the latter forties, the population shifted from rural to urban areas. This and other types of migration caused many acute problems in urban centers. Faced with those problems, towns called upon the provincial government for assistance. The result was a Town and Rural Planning Act in 1950.

Under this legislation, five district planning commissions were set up. Each includes one of our large cities and an area surrounding it. Thus, Edmonton District Planning Commission includes Edmonton, Fort Saskatchewan, Leduc, etc. Calgary has a similar area. The Provincial Government pays 50% of each commission's budget. Towns outside these district planning commissions can ask for free and complete planning service directly from the provincial office:

**Director of Town and Rural Planning  
Department of Municipal Affairs,  
Government of the Province of Alberta.**

The usual procedure is that the town will request assistance in planning from the central office, which may then proceed to carry out their request. The first step is the making of a planning survey in which information is secured on such things as topography, buildings, land use, traffic, occupational statistics and population trends. On the basis of such information, a plan is prepared to serve as a guide for the future development of the town. The implementation of the plan becomes the responsibility of the town council. Although they can still call on the advice and assistance of the Planning Board, it will be the council members themselves who will primarily determine the success of the planning scheme in the town.

Besides the actual interest and attitude of the town council towards carrying out a plan, there are other problems which make planning in towns difficult. Money for capital expenditures may be

short. It may be difficult to convince the town residents that far-sighted projects which appear costly may in the long run be relatively less expensive than short-term solutions. Enforcement of by-laws may be hampered by the highly personal nature of small town life. Planned use of land may be thwarted by the fact that most of the available business lots, or a proposed new development, may be owned by a single individual.

Specifically, the Town Planning Board may be interested in such fields as the following:

- (a) Parks and open spaces in the centre of a town
- (b) Layout of streets and roads
- (c) Land on the outskirts of a town
- (d) Plans for capital expenditures.

Let us briefly examine each of these.

What is the necessity or advisability of having parks and open spaces within the heart of a town? In the heart of New York is an open space famous throughout the United States—Central Park. Much of the business district faces the park. The space is much sought after and brings the city high tax returns. Another example is Hyde Park in London. In fact many European cities have space set aside for the public. Why? Because it gives people a chance to expand, walk, see the sun, appreciate the beauty of nature and of man's invention too. Perhaps in such a place, lovers may meet, one may feed pigeons, sail a boat, read a paper on a park bench, bask in the sun, or eat lunch in silent reverie. A businessman looking out of his window at the park may see life in bloom, and this in turn may make life more meaningful and worthwhile for him. In Alberta, however, as it now stands in most towns, the amount of open space in a town diminishes as the town grows. Future town planning should require that more park area and open spaces for playgrounds be available.

Differences of opinion exist between planning experts and many local residents of towns (and cities) about patterns of laying out streets. Most present street systems are laid out in regular rectangular shapes. How else may streets be laid out? What are the advantages of the other systems compared to the rectangular "grid"?

In order for a town to grow in an orderly fashion it should own the land or at least have control of the use of the land on its outskirts. These outskirts may someday be part of the town. If hideous shacks, dumping grounds, junk yards, etc., surround the town, development is discouraged and people entering the town are unfavorably impressed.

Finally, the future of any town depends to a great extent on the plan for capital expenditures. This means that the town must be able to raise and spend money on a long-range program designed to extend sewer and water systems, surface drainage, sidewalk construction, and street improvement. The Planning Board makes an

estimate of the town's future financial resources and borrowing power to help with such schemes. If you merely glance at the town's plan for capital expenditures you may accept it readily; but think of a town council's problem. Let us say that the main road is potholed by the spring drainage and rain. Will they authorize re-graveling and maintenance for, say, \$1,000, or tell the citizens that instead they plan to go ahead with a drainage system which will cost \$5,000 and for which few people see an immediate need? These then are problems which must be considered because they shape a town's future.

From experiences gathered in the planning of small towns thus far, it seems that they have the same kind of problems that larger towns and cities have, but that these differ in scale. The problems involve such things as:

1. **Traffic:** (a) Segregation of through and local, heavy and light.  
(b) Elimination of bottlenecks and hazardous intersections.
2. **Parking:** (a) Shortage of space.
3. **Fringe developments:**  
(a) Outskirts developed without control of town.
4. **Central area:**  
(a) Decay of older buildings.  
(b) Redevelopment needed.
5. **Extraordinary growth:**  
(a) No tax money from new areas.  
(b) Demand for utilities.  
(c) No money for such growth.
6. **Co-ordination of development:**  
(a) No master five- or ten-year plan on capital works program; i.e., sewers, drainage, etc.

Having considered some of the problems with which towns may be faced, let us now consider how one Alberta town studied its problems and took steps to correct them and to plan for the future.

We will call this town "X". It dates back to the time the surrounding farming area was first settled at the turn of the century. "X" began as a crossroad hamlet, a distinctly local centre serving a small farming community and having relatively poor access to larger centres and markets for local production. Even after the coming of the railroad it has remained primarily a market town and its growth has been directly related to farming development in the area served.

"X" has continued to grow despite disorderly development, but it has been a more costly and less convenient and less pleasant

place in which to live than it might have been. For instance, a compact shopping area would be cheaper to provide light and utilities to, and more convenient for the shoppers than is the scattering of commercial buildings which actually exist there. The mixture of houses and shacks in most residential areas not only is unsightly but also discourages good construction and brings poor tax returns.

After 1941, business from rural population began to decline as the effect of mechanization of farming began to be felt. Excess rural labour moved to urban centres. Although most of the people migrated to the cities, many settled in "X" and accounted for the 50% increase which occurred in the population between 1941 and 1946. In "X", the prevailing confusion over what lands were for what use was simply extended in scale. Such a result was probably encouraged by the strong spirit of individualism among the local inhabitants, a normal feature of life in a frontier region.

Having considered the past growth of "X", let us now consider its present state. There is still no orderly developed commercial area, and the commercial building set back at varying distances are sometimes located on residential lots, while some homes have been built in the commercial area. Furthermore, in the central part of this town, open areas are being set aside for commercial and residential use rather than as open public spaces for parks and playgrounds.

The story of "X" could be repeated with minor differences in many towns of Alberta. This is not said to discredit them, but is an attempt to look at realities. However, a change is taking place in "X" and in many other communities throughout Alberta. To trace the change we will have to digress for a moment.

Since our town "X" was not in an area designated as being a District Planning Commission, the Town Council asked the Town and Rural Planning Branch of the Department of Municipal Affairs for assistance. Following approval by the Branch, the planning went ahead. A survey was made concerning the following factors:

1. Why and how was this town originally settled?
2. What is the town's present state?
3. What forces are shaping the foreseeable future of the town?

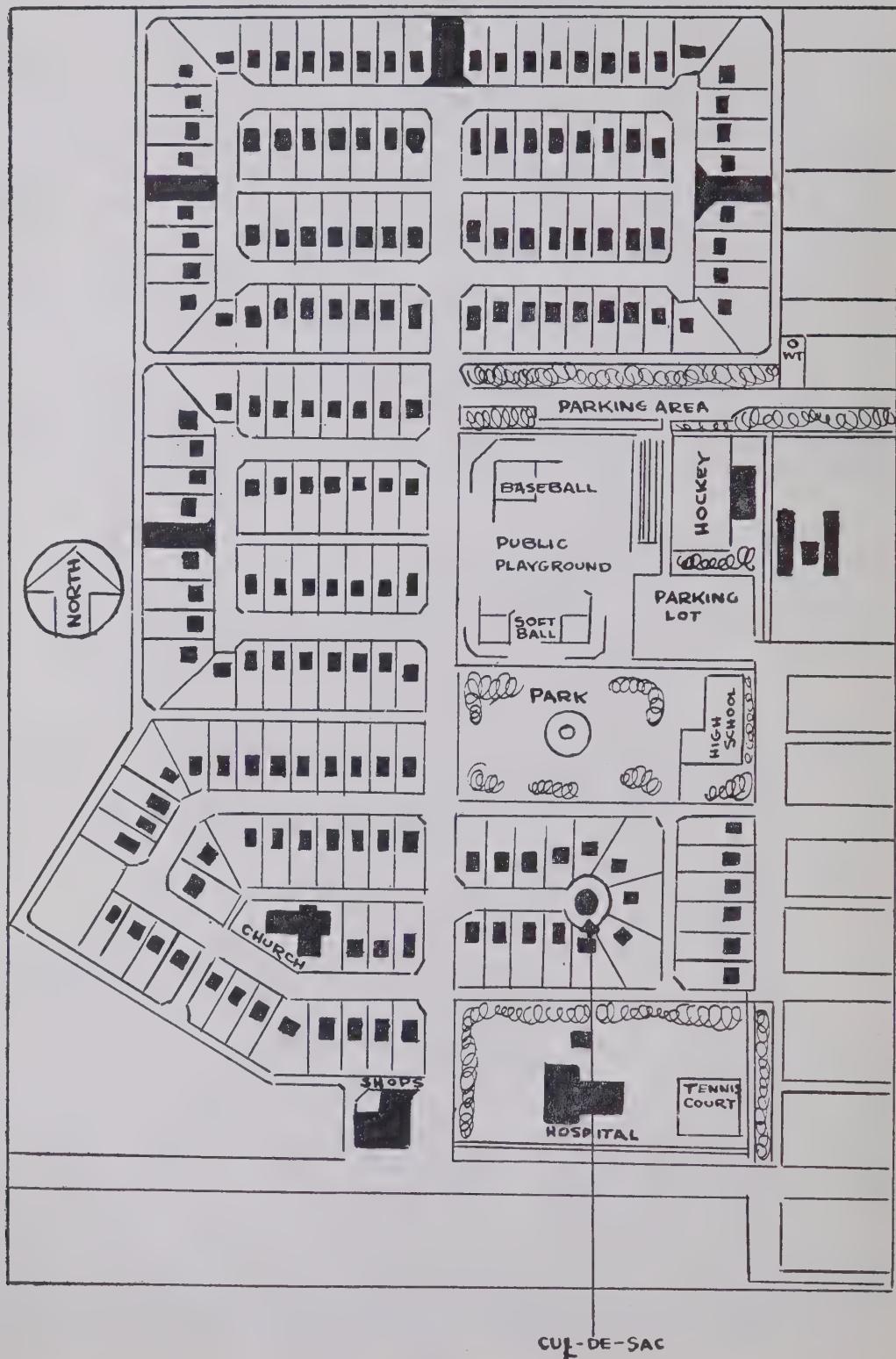
On the basis of the information gained and evaluated in terms of past and present development, plans were laid for the future.

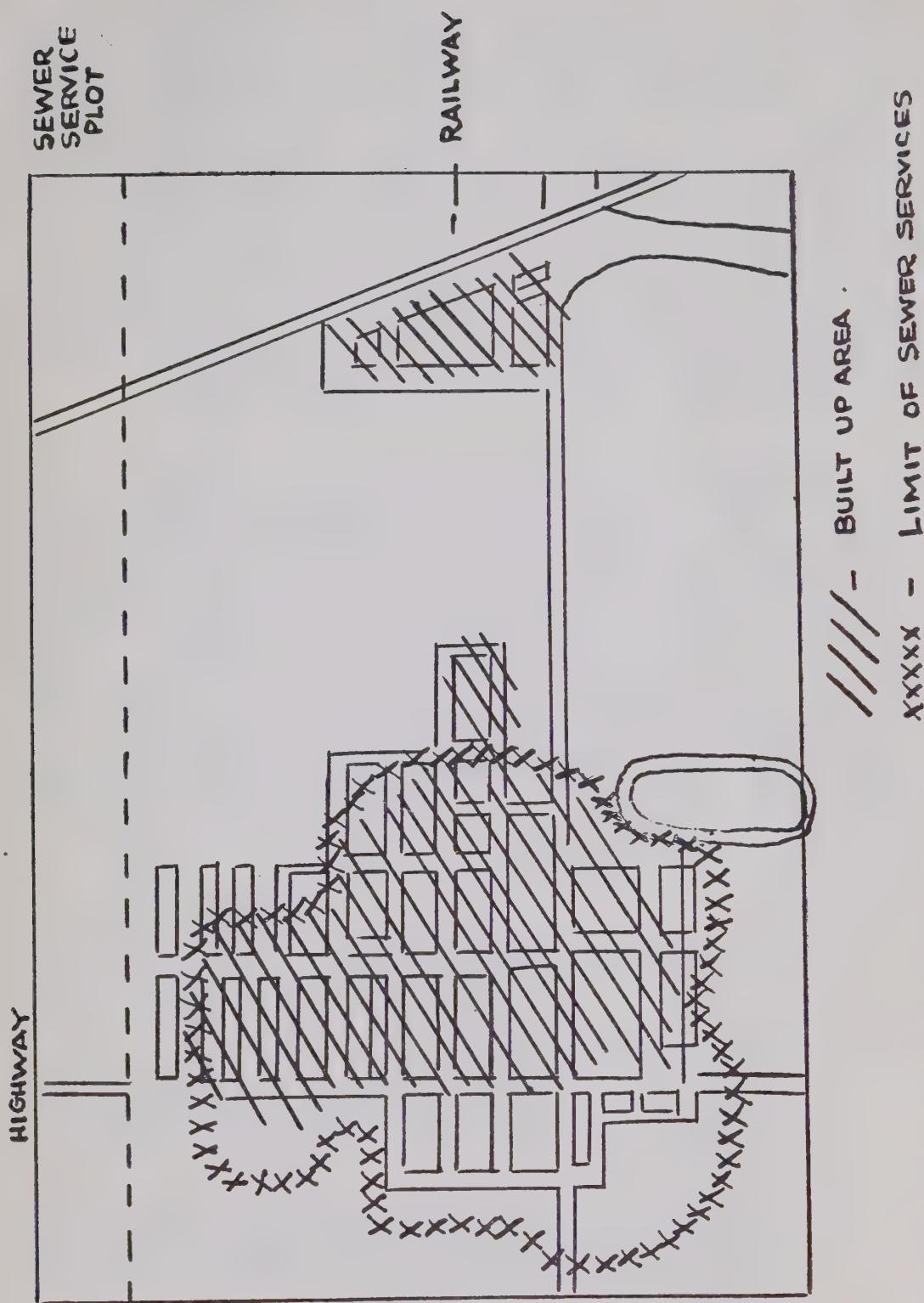
As planning is determined largely by population trends, after reviewing the progress of farming, lumbering, gas and oil exploration, and appraising each of these factors in "X's" growth, the Planning Board estimated that the population would reach 1,150 to 1,300 by 1959. Guided by this figure, residential areas were plotted so as to be within the limit of sewer servicing, where the most economical servicing extensions could be added. Sites were chosen for school grounds so that the school might function as a community centre in such a subdivision. The numbers of potential streets and

lanes were cut down to discourage possible through traffic and to reduce maintenance costs and accident risks.

To accommodate increased population and in order to increase efficiency and serviceability, the Planning Board also advised the commercial area to do away with driveways and to keep the entire

A PROPOSED SUBDIVISION IN "X"





commercial frontage built along the length of each block. Servicing could be done from the lanes while the improved frontal appearance would provide greater parking area, and consequently permit more business.

What other forces might change the town of "X"? Industry? It would appear that "X" will not require industrial space within

the period up to 1964. Highways? Should a new highway open up, the town might have to replot in order to have some commercial property, such as service stations, facing the highway; but zoning laws would have to be enforced in order to keep the highways open for through traffic. You may be thinking that it is unfair to keep business areas away from large highways. Keep in mind that the highways are designed for cars speeding along at 60 m.p.h. and that every time little areas build up, restricted speed zones have to be laid out. Motorists are imperilled by cars and pedestrians alike entering this highway, or by cars parked just off to the side. Thus, multi-million-dollar highways are reduced greatly in efficiency and original purpose. It has been found that business and commercial areas do better when placed away from the highway because there is room to park and to shop in convenience and leisure.

#### **A Final Note:**

In a small town, life is of a highly personal nature. To live together happily, the citizens must do business with each other, work together, and mingle socially. It is hard for a citizen to talk about decaying buildings if he happens to own one. Therefore, you as students must be tactful in your questions, as must the professional planner who helps towns of Alberta. Remember, this is a new field of endeavour in which Alberta is forging ahead. The people in our small towns have an overwhelming desire to make their communities more efficient, pleasanter and happier places in which to live. Patience and the willingness to let community needs rule over individual self-interest will win the day for future community planning.

#### **Assignments:**

- I. Trace the history of your community. What natural resources is it dependent upon for existence?
- II. Make group surveys of the present state of your community under the following headings:
  - (a) Topography—emphasis should be on natural drainage and its relation to land use; e.g., don't plan residential districts in a valley through which a creek might run during the spring run-off.
  - (b) Population—try to find out the yearly population increase since 1945. On a percentage basis, estimate the population five years hence. What will be the residential needs? (Use 4.5 people per home as a basis.)  
The information secured in A and B (above) may be used in planning a new area for development.
  - (c) Traffic—(1) By traffic count find out which streets in the central area receive the heaviest traffic load. (2) Are any of your streets used by out-of-town traffic? (3) What is the traffic count in one sample residential area?

- (d) The information secured in (c) may be used to make suggestions for better roads and safer intersections where they are needed. It may indicate where expensive maintenance may not be required at present or in the future.
- (e) Parking—Survey are areas usually occupied by parked cars, also those buildings which accommodate large numbers of people (theatres, cafes, etc.). Suggest or survey the area for parking space. Furthermore, if the commercial area is expanding, suggest a parking centre convenient to this area.
- (f) Fringe Development—Have a group investigate the housing and building going on at the outskirts of town. Is it regulated by the town? Will it hinder future town development? Discuss.
- (g) Central Area—Investigate this part for decaying and unsightly buildings. Also check areas or blocks within the central area which are run-down and need replacing. Suggest possible action for the future.
- (h) Growth and Development—Find out if the town is working on the development of sewers, drainage, paving and street improvement. How extensive is the development? How long will the projects last?

This survey should give you some idea of your town's problems and the need for planning in the town.

- III. Use this survey to re-plan the town as you would have it. Include parks, open spaces, commercial areas, residential areas, industrial areas (if need be), traffic routes, parking areas, and fringe areas. Eliminate blighted areas. Extend your capital works program.

A town drawn to scale on its own topography would be an interesting and worthwhile project.

## THE CITY

In 1848, the famous Canadian artist, Paul Kane, visited Fort Edmonton. He left us an account of his visit in which he described the Christmas festivities in the lonely fort overlooking the Saskatchewan River. Could he have dreamed that this little village of traders, Indians and missionaries would in time become a large city of two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants?

And what of the visions of other wanderers, explorers and pioneers of this province? How many of them could have foreseen the growth of the other Alberta cities: Calgary, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Drumheller, Wetaskiwin, Camrose, and Grande Prairie?

Technically, in Alberta, a city is an urban community with a population of over 6,000, which has been given a charter by an act of the Provincial Legislature. However, cities are not merely created by Act of the Legislature. Slowly and steadily, or with phenomenal rapidity, they have grown from hamlets and villages to important centers.

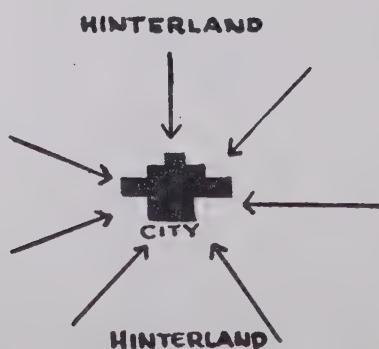
What causes cities to grow? What factors determine whether a center will grow into a city or not? Why did Fort Edmonton on the Saskatchewan grow into a great city, while Fort Dunvegan on the Peace declined in importance till now its site is a historical landmark?

In this unit we will study some of the reasons for the growth of cities. We will investigate some of the problems which have arisen because of that growth, and we will discuss some of the steps being taken to solve these problems.

### I. What Factors Favor the Development of a City?

#### Trade

Inhabitants of an area or hinterland need supplies. They also produce goods or services for the needs of other people. Therefore, selling and buying (trade) occurs at some central point established for the exchange of goods and services. The amount of trade de-



pends upon the size and productivity of the hinterland, and the size of its population. Trading will increase if the business leaders are enterprising and aggressive. The larger the amount of trading, the larger will the trading center become.

### **Transportation Facilities**

In earlier days, location on a navigable river was favorable to development. More favorable still was a location at the confluence of two such rivers. A good natural harbor if accessible to ocean-going vessels, and with a rich hinterland, was inevitably the location of a growing center.

In the interior, the location of railroads became a deciding factor. Where two or more railroad lines converged was an extremely favorable location, especially if one were a transcontinental line. Towns developed as collecting centers or distributing centers, or both. Generally, the rise of cities is associated with a point where a break in transportation occurs, where boats must be unloaded, where trains must be assembled, where fleets of trucks must be provided.

### **Productivity**

A wealth of natural resources, such as a mineral deposit, leads to their development, either through primary processing or through manufacturing. Workers are needed in the developing industry and the center grows in population.

### **Political Factors**

A city chosen by people as a seat of government or as an educational center will grow as the demands of the population for these services increases.

### **Natural Factors**

Scenery, climatic conditions, and facilities for enjoyment of leisure time, have an influence. Such factors are basic to centers which are holiday resorts, or to centers chosen for retirement after a man's working years are over.

A particular city may be the result of one, or of a combination of several of the above factors. Needless to say, the location must have a source of water (usually a river), a source of power, a source of reasonably inexpensive fuel, and room for expansion.

### **Assignments:**

1. (a) How do you explain the development of each of the following Alberta cities? (a) Calgary, (b) Edmonton, (c) Lethbridge, (d) Medicine Hat, (e) Red Deer, (f) Drumheller, (g) Camrose, (h) Banff (town).  
(b) Study a map of Alberta to further substantiate your statements as to how the factors determining growth have affected each of the above cities.

(c) Secure maps of the above cities. Study the map of each city to determine how each of the factors determining city growth have affected the pattern of settlement and development in the city.

2. What factors were basic to the development of: St. John, N.B.; Vancouver, B.C.; Windsor, Ont.; Hamilton, Ont.; Saskatoon, Sask.; Ottawa, Ont.; Sudbury, Ont.; Kitimat, B.C.; Victoria, B.C.; Winnipeg, Man.; Toronto, Ont.; Montreal, Quebec?

## II. How Rapid Has Been the Growth of Cities?

Throughout the history of our nation, population figures have shown a gradual but steady drift of people to urban centres. In 1867, over seventy-five per cent of Canadians were on farms. Now only about thirty per cent remain. In 1951, sixty-two per cent of our population lived in urban centres, and the forecast is that by 1980, eighty per cent will be in urban centres. (Report of Gordon Commission.)

The following table could be studied as one means of indicating the growth of cities. The figures refer to the number of houses, and the probable need for houses in the future.

Center	Houses in 1951	Houses in 1955	Annual rate of Increase	No. of Years required to double at this rate
Calgary	40,235	50,671	5.77%	12.0
Edmonton	46,395	59,614	6.27%	11.0
Halifax	29,640	33,891	3.35%	20.7
Winnipeg	95,955	106,906	2.64%	26.3
Vancouver	153,975	175,257	3.24%	21.4
St. John, N.B.	19,735	20,574	1.04%	66.7

### Assignment:

1. Using such references as
  - (i) Canada Year Book,
  - (ii) Alberta Facts and Figures,
  - (iii) Annual report of the Department of Municipal Affairs, secure statistics on the population of your city (or nearest city) in five-year intervals since 1925. Illustrate with a broken-line graph.
    - (a) What has been the percentage of growth during each five-year period?
    - (b) What factors may have accounted for this growth?
2. Using the above references, secure statistics on population growth in other cities in the province. How does the rate of growth of each of these compare with the rate of growth of your city?

### III. Why Do People Move to the City?

The city is a place of opportunity in many phases of living.

#### 1. Employment

The city is a place of genuine work and individual effort. The great population and the business and industry there create a market for a person's services, especially if a person is skilled in a special field.

The work a man does is the source of his income, and that income determines the extent to which advantage can be taken of most, if not all, of the other opportunities which a city offers.

#### 2. Services Available

The large departmental stores and stores which carry particular lines of goods, the specialists in the many professions, the skilled tradesmen—all these make for a more comfortable living.

#### 3. Health and Educational Facilities

The large hospitals and the specialists in the field of medicine give an added sense of security.

A large concentration of students enables the school authorities to offer a very broad school curriculum allowing the high school student to specialize in his field of interest. Junior colleges or universities, business, trade, and technical schools, exist for those wishing education beyond the high school level.

#### 4. Social Life

In the city one can be sure of a wide choice of activities. Churches of all denominations can be found. Theatres provide a wide choice of motion pictures. Musical clubs offer symphony, opera, or light concerts. Libraries, art exhibits, handicraft groups and dancing schools contribute to enjoyment. Service clubs and cultural groups appeal to many.

In the field of physical recreation, there can be found many facilities. Swimming pools, skating rinks, curling rinks, riding stables and baseball diamonds are but a few of these.

#### 5. Physical Comforts

Most homes are comfortable and are supplied with water facilities, electricity, and natural gas at very reasonable rates.

While these factors are aspects of city living, many city dwellers see disadvantages in their way of life. The crowds met in moving to and from work and in shopping cause annoyance. Traffic on the streets and the noise and bustle bother many people. Life is geared to the clock. Large numbers of undesirables flock to the city and

crime flourishes. One may not know his neighbor too well and may not know at all the families his children play with. So, we find the occasional city-dweller longing for a life of the greater independence and for having his family more of a unit as he fancies the farmer or small-town dweller does.

### **Assignments:**

1. Conduct an open forum, panel discussion or a debate on the following topic:  
A city offers a better environment in which to bring up a family than does (a) the town, (b) the farm.
2. To what extent is each of the factors listed in this section stimulating growth in your city?
3. (a) Using a map of your city as a guide, draw an outline map of it in your notebook. On the map place an X to mark the approximate location of your home. From this point draw labelled arrows to the following locations in the city:
  - (i) Where your parent works
  - (ii) Where you go to school
  - (iii) Where you go to church
  - (iv) Where your nearest park or recreation center is
  - (v) Where you may obtain health services(b) Using pins with different-colored heads, consolidate the above information for your entire class on a map on the bulletin board.
4. Using different colors, indicate on a map of the city the sections which are
  - (i) residential,
  - (ii) business,
  - (iii) recreational,
  - (iv) educational.
5. What age group seems to be predominant in the recent city influx? Give reasons why this group should be dominant.

## **IV. What Is a Metropolitan Area?**

Cities tend to grow outward about their perimeters.

Over the past twenty-five years numbers of people working in the city, who have been able to afford to do so, have chosen to have some of the advantages of rural living and have moved to fine new housing developments away from the more concentrated noise and bustle of the city.

During this same period, a great many people, also working in the city, but not being able to secure low-cost housing or rent within

their economic means, have established fringe communities on the outskirts of cities. These people still work in the cities, do the bulk of their business there, but live in and pay their taxes to the new communities which have their own municipal governments as distinct from those of cities.

Further outside the cities are the satellite towns which are self-governing, relatively self-contained communities with a good balance between economy and residential population.

Over a period of time in some cities, the movement and growth has been so great that fringe communities and satellite towns once completely independent have found themselves within the orbits of the cities. The once relatively isolated new housing developments now have the growing fringe communities crowding in upon them. The cities, fringe communities, and satellite towns now find themselves with many mutual problems which may be solved through co-operation, but which require an authority above city and town government for solution.

To make possible the solution of problems facing these super-communities, or **metropolitan areas**, planning commissions have been established for the metropolitan areas centered in each of Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Red Deer, and including in its membership the rural municipalities, suburbs, and independent towns within a radius of up to fifty miles from each central city. These commissions are supported financially by the member municipalities and the provincial government, which pays half of each commission's annual budget. The commissions engage their own technical staffs. While the commission's chief responsibilities are in the field of regional and metropolitan planning, their technicians are also available to their small-town members for local planning.

### **Assignments:**

1. Draw a map of your own metropolitan area. Mark and name the city proper, the fringe communities, the satellite towns.
2. What problems would a city, its fringe communities and its satellite towns have which could best be solved through co-operation? What about street numbering? Roads? Police? Water and sewer? Zoning by-laws?
3. You may live in, or know of, a large town where the trend toward the metropolitan area, on a small scale, can be observed. Are people building homes along the highway leading into town? (Ribbon development.) (a) Why do they do this? (b) What problems do such development and fringe development create for the town? For the school authorities? For the municipal authorities?
4. What is meant by a "dormitory town"? Give an example of one. What difficulties might a dormitory town experience in building its streets, in supplying water and sewer facilities, and in financing its schools?

## V. What Neighborhoods Do We Find Within A City?

In the city the term "neighborhood" has several meanings.

If you are growing up in a city, you will know one meaning of the term "neighborhood". Mother might have said, "Stay around the neighborhood", and when you were very young that meant up and down the front sidewalk, or the back lane. As you grew older, "the neighborhood" included your baseball diamond, skating rink, school grounds, the club house over Jones' garage, and the corner store. This is the home or family neighborhood.

In another sense, areas or sections within the city are called "neighborhoods". Such areas have fairly definite boundaries. But one district in a city may be a pleasant residential one; another, in an older section, will have poorer houses and factories and warehouses crowding in. Sometimes we find "islands" in the city peopled by one ethnic group, or by people of one religion, or by people of a definite economic status, or by people of one occupation. One reason for the existence of such "islands" is that individuals want to live amongst congenial people who are much like themselves. Another is determined by the proximity to work or transportation. The most important factor determining the composition of such areas is economic. People generally live where they can afford to live. This, more than any other reason, accounts for the difference in residential areas in our cities. We feel happy and secure among our equals. Thus, districts called "neighborhoods" form, and develop definite characteristics. It is also true that over a period of years those characteristics may change. Families move in and out. Children grow up. Houses grow older and may be allowed to deteriorate. These changes are gradual, however, so that in any short period we may fairly accurately describe such a neighborhood which actually comprises a city district.

Sociologists, who are people who study changes in living and in social structure, feel that a "well defined neighborhood" is the answer to many social problems which are developing in a city. This neighborhood should contain 3,000 - 5,000 people, have its own school, its own parks and playgrounds, its own churches, shopping facilities and entertainment facilities. Within this neighborhood, people would build their friendships and engage in social and recreational activities. One of the basic needs of the human being is that of belonging to a group. In the large city, people often find this need not met adequately. The "neighborhood unit" is the sociologist's answer to this problem. It is by this planned, designed area that sociologists and town planners hope to solve some of the problems involved in living in a city.

### Assignments:

1. What section of your city or nearest city might be called (a) a new neighborhood, (b) an old neighborhood, (c) a neighborhood being taken over by business and factories, (d) a neighborhood

predominantly of one ethnic group, (e) a neighborhood predominantly of one religion?

2. What constitutes an ideal family neighborhood? An ideal community neighborhood?
3. In cities and large towns are there neighborhoods called "blighted areas"? What factors produce a blighted area?

## VI. What Pattern of Growth is Discernable in Nearly All Cities?

Cities seem to be arranged in roughly circular waves or zones around a central island or city center where the largest stores and business establishments are located. Most of the roads and transportation lines run to this center. Bus and railroad terminals are found there. Most persons in business would like to have their stores or offices in this small area or as close to it as possible, so land and space become very valuable. As land values increase, buildings become taller, and we find the multi-storey buildings and the occasional skyscraper. On the edges of this circle are a few older homes and business buildings, somewhat dilapidated through years of use.

The second wave or zone contains the factories and industrial areas. Also within this wave the warehouses and trucking concerns are established. This area was at one time residential in its use, and today we find some homes left, often small and badly crowded, dirty from train smoke and dusty streets.

Beyond this ring we find fresh-looking, newer residential sections. The older of these sections are in the "grid" pattern, but in the newer we may find the circular community unit design.

Outside this ring we find relatively open space. The houses are scattered and we may find chicken farms and dairy farms. Perhaps a few new large industrial plants may be found located in this more open section.

Besides, and within these roughly circular zones, other patterns of development may be observed. **Multiple-nuclei patterns** of growth develop about certain areas in a city. In Edmonton these are to be found about North Edmonton, Strathcona, Calder, Highlands, Jasper Place and Beverly. In addition, there may be **sector patterns** of growth along such areas as Jasper Avenue and 101 Street in Edmonton.

These, then, are the patterns of the modern large city. Remember that the city had its beginning as a small town with its few stores and homes close in. Those first buildings were not elaborate or expensive, according to today's standards. As time went by they could be converted to other uses or replaced with other structures. The replacement might in turn be dismantled to give place to a very modern building, or it might be left to become an "old" building in the "old business section".

We see these waves or patterns today. Some years ago the patterns were smaller, but as time passed they enlarged to their

present size. Changes in ways of living, in transportation methods, and in amounts of business being transacted—all these, interacting, will cause the patterns to change gradually in the future.

#### Assignments:

1. Obtain an aerial map of your city and plot out the patterns encircling the city center, the industrial area, the residential area, and the outskirts. Also plot any multiple-nuclei and sector patterns which may occur. On your map indicate the purposes for which the land is used in each pattern.
2. It is said of cities that "the business section moves in the direction of the greatest purchasing power". Can you find evidence to support this statement?
3. Is there in your city an old business section which is being reclaimed? What use is to be made of it?

### VII. How is a City Organized?

A township, thirty-six square miles, sounds like a lot of land; but when we place in it some one hundred thousand people, a complexity of problems arises. Then it is desirable to have some physical plan, some order to the arrangement of houses, stores, factories and schools. There must be order to the streets, and some arrangement for water and power facilities. Protection must be provided for against fire and criminal elements. Gainful employment must be found for a large proportion of these people. Arrangements must be made for education, for use of leisure time, for caring for the sick. Churches must be erected. The needs of the visitors to the city must not be overlooked.

Local governments for municipal purposes and for education was established early in the history of any city. In Alberta's cities these were established when the settlement was still in the village classification. These two local governments accepted responsibility for planning and developing many of the needs mentioned above.

In addition to these two governmental bodies, individuals or groups of individuals undertook planning and development in the fields left untouched. Such groups located and built the churches, community skating rinks and curling rinks and perhaps the neighborhood parks. A group of businessmen, organized as a Chamber of Commerce, looked after the needs of business. Other groups formed into Service Clubs which, though partly social clubs, undertook to care for underprivileged persons in the city. Other groups again organized for the purposes of fostering music, or art, or forms of adult education.

Thus is a city organized, planned and developed. Each and every citizen must find his needs met. He must have a home among congenial neighbors. He must have gainful employment. He must have transportation from home to his place of work. His property

must be protected, his children educated, his family's health maintained. There must be companionship for himself and family. Facilities for recreation must exist especially for his children, and his cultural and spiritual needs must be satisfied.

### **Assignments:**

1. What specific work is undertaken by each of the following organizations: (a) The Canadian Club; (b) The Woman's Musical Society; (c) The Rotary Club; (d) The Lion's Club; (e) The Optimists; (f) The Chamber of Commerce; (g) The Canadian National Institute for the Blind?
2. What other organizations can you name which help citizens in your community to satisfy their many needs? (Use the telephone directory to find examples of such organizations and agencies.)

## **VIII. Urban Problems**

### **A. What Difficulties in the Physical Structure Causes Problems?**

Several factors have contributed to the physical deficiencies in our cities. Original planning in Alberta could not foresee the needs of today. In those days, with horse and buggy the mode of transportation, what need was there for wide streets? Even in the twenties, could anyone prophecy that there would be the cross-city traffic we have today? Then there has been the recurrence of depression years, during which people could not see any chance of progress, let alone spend money planning for it. Until recently there had been an abundance of corner-lot playgrounds and natural woods within walking distance of city homes, and the planning of parks seemed quite unnecessary. The railway surveyors, accustomed to the north-south and east-west roads of the country, applied them to the city scene as a matter of course, thinking little of beauty and only of convenience and utility. Furthermore, there is an ingrained attitude in our prairie culture of independence. Insofar as possible, we like each man to do what he wishes to do, and we do not wish to hedge him in with regulations and ordinances regarding the use he makes of his property.

Then came the sudden spurt of growth in the "forties", and the physical deficiencies in the more rapidly growing cities, particularly, became very apparent. Streets were found to be too narrow, and bridges too few and poorly located. The parking of tremendous numbers of automobiles used by workers and shoppers overtaxed the parking areas on streets and in vacant lots. Areas once entirely residential were taken over for business. A housing shortage caused the conversion of the family home into a multiple-family dwelling. The increased population taxed the playground space and school facilities. Schools near the city were depleted of students as residences gave way to business. The sudden increase in population taxed the water supply. When a new sub-division opened, services such as water and sewer, sidewalks and roads could not be provided. With the

pressure on extension of services, older districts could not receive the attention needed for repair of existing services and became "run-down", and approached slum conditions. The demand for lots for building purposes left no playgrounds for the children, and the natural beauty spots gave way to rows and rows of homes.

Physical deficiencies have developed in our cities through lack of adequate planning for the future.

### **Assignments:**

1. Should a citizen have the right to locate and develop his property as he sees fit and without restriction? Can you support your opinion with good reasons in the following cases:
  - (a) Should he have the right to build an expensive home in the section of the city where homes are deteriorating?
  - (b) Should he have the right to build a small, three-room home in a section where most other homes are worth \$40,000 or so?
  - (c) Should he have the right to build and operate a grocery store in the middle of a residential block?
  - (d) Should a garage be allowed to operate beside a well-established funeral parlor?
  - (e) Should an airport be established beside a hospital?
2. The City Council does put restrictions on types of houses to be built in the various neighborhoods. Restrictions are placed on the location of types of businesses. These restrictions are called "Zoning By-laws". What restrictions would you suggest as necessary in a new sub-division just being developed?

(See page 18 for further discussion.)

### **B. What Deficiencies in the Social Structure Cause Problems?**

Many organizations, clubs, church groups, young people's groups, recreational groups and other organizations exist in the city, which, beside their main activity, provide for companionship of a socially acceptable type. Yet one individual describes his year spent in a city as the loneliest one of his life. Possibly he was to blame, himself. But he claims he made no friends outside his fellow workers in his office, and had to spend hours getting to and from their homes when he visited with them. With the mass of humanity around him, a man can still feel lonely.

With the corner lot, the lot on which the baseball game was played, gone, what facilities exist for children to play? What supervision is given children's activities and teen-age activities? Parents who work in evening shifts cannot give their children the supervision they should have, and it is easy for teen-age gangs to develop, gangs which move from one form of excitement to another, ending up in serious and criminal delinquency. Children and teen-agers

need facilities for their activities and proper supervision. The large city must make adequate provision for meeting these problems.

A city may develop factions, favored groups, and groups discriminated against. A wealthy residential area may be able to provide adequately for its entertainment, both for adults and youth; while a neighborhood of average or low-income families cannot provide necessary facilities. Jealousy and resentment develop and the city becomes divided over issues which may show up in local elections. Similar splits may develop in a city because of religious groupings, or groupings based on differences of nationality. When the city becomes so divided that evidences of unfairness and discrimination occur, we might say there is a deficiency in the social structure.

A large city attracts to it many criminals, those who live by theft, gambling, bootlegging, drug-peddling, and so on. The anonymity possible in large numbers makes it easy for them to carry on their activities with less chance of detection. They seem to gravitate to certain sections and unfortunately infect the original residents there, finding recruits especially among the young people. A special challenge faces city authorities in their handling of the youth of a neighborhood developing in this way.

These are examples of deficiencies in the social structure of a city.

### **Assignments:**

1. What part is played by the following agencies or organizations in overcoming social deficiencies in a city:  
(a) The Community League, (b) The Recreation Commission, (c) The Teen-Town, (d) The Students' Union in a school, (e) The Church, (f) The Service Club, (g) The Professional Hockey or Football Team, (h) Little League Baseball, (i) a Golf Club, (j) The Home and School Association, (k) The Old People's Home.
2. Most sociologists view with concern the changes which have occurred in family living over the past fifty years. In those days the home was the center of social life and of entertainment. Of the ten groups listed in Assignment #1 above, only the church was at all prominent.
  - (a) How has the family changed over the past fifty years?
  - (b) Is family unity strengthened or weakened by (i) The Community League, (ii) The Church, (iii) The Movie, (iv) The Teen-Town?
  - (c) What could a city or neighborhood provide which would serve to strengthen family unity?

## IX. Is Planning Necessary in All Cities?

The discussion so far should have indicated to you a definite need for planning in cities. The passage of years has changed the habits of people and the early planning of the city's development no longer fits its needs. The growth in population which has filled all the vacant areas of the city proper and is now spilling over the surrounding countryside has greatly overtaxed the existing facilities: homes available, roads, stores, parks and playgrounds.

### Planning of Urban Re-Development:

This planning has three aspects. First there is the need for re-designing the existing facilities, modifying them when suitable occasions arise to make for more effective service to the citizens as a whole. Planning of roads and bridges, with attention paid to the accompanying problems of parking and traffic flow, is necessary. Periodic attention must be paid to the possibility of re-zoning the older neighborhoods where the needs of the public and the rights of the private property owner may come into conflict. Reservations must be made of space for recreational and educational facilities strategically located.

### Planning of New Subdivisions:

Second there is the need for planning new subdivisions. Here more modern principles can be applied than were followed in the earlier years when the "grid" system of subdivision was followed. The mistakes of the past need not be repeated. Considerable study has been given to forecasting developments, and while we build for the present we can have an eye to the future and can plan accordingly.

### Regional Planning:

Third, the city proper is not alone in its problem of planning. The fringe areas and the satellite towns which, along with the city, form the metropolitan area, have problems in common and plans must be laid to meet the needs of the whole. Roads, fire protection, water supply, sewer, power, police protection, schools, parks and so on are problems common to the whole area and there can well be common policy on them.

## X. Is Planning New?

It has been indicated that some planning has been present in the development of our Alberta cities. The grid pattern of city blocks, the streets, water and sewer and power are evidence of that. In older cities, planning had started earlier, and in many instances is more greatly advanced.

In England, Sir Ebenezer Howard is known as the originator of "Garden Cities" which were designed to give cities parks and garden

space, spacious neighborhoods with streets giving easy access to places of work and business. President George Washington called on Major Pierre L'Enfant in 1791 to produce a plan for the city of Washington, D.C. This plan made use of radial roads like spokes from the hub of a wheel crossed by side roads, giving almost rectangular blocks. He selected definite positions for major buildings, with direct routes joining them. He introduced large squares and circles at important intersections, producing a beautiful city which has withstood the changes of the last one hundred and sixty years.

In Alberta, the first town planning act was passed in 1913 authorizing municipalities to prepare plans, hire planning consultants, and make zoning by-laws. The province itself took an active part in planning between 1929 and 1933. A new planning act was passed in 1930, the first director of town planning was appointed, and a separate planning branch was established in the Department of Municipal Affairs. During the depression, the Town Planning Branch disappeared completely until the late 1940's. A revival of interest in planning appeared in 1947; a Director of Town and Rural Planning, and a planning branch again came into existence. After 1951 the branch was made a separate unit again under the Department of Municipal Affairs. Today it is a strong and active organization supported by provincial and local governments.

## XI. How Does a City Control its Development?

1. **Zoning**—In many respects zoning is like building rooms within a house. If a father came home one day and said, "I'm going to tear down all the walls within this house and have one big room," what would the family think? The kitchen sink would be next to the bathroom plumbing, the living room would look into the bedrooms, and storage of food, bedding, clothing, etc., would be in full view. In our homes we use walls to separate the space in a house, so that we can use our space efficiently and intelligently.

In a city or town the same need to use space efficiently and intelligently exists. Would we like to see a service station built on one side of a school ground and the stock yards on the other? Should we place the elementary school on the busiest street where children are in danger as they cross? Should we have to go a mile from our residential district to play ball, to get groceries, to have a prescription in case of illness? We would probably agree that some parts of a city should be reserved for residences, schools, recreation grounds and local shopping centers. Other parts would be best reserved for larger businesses, for wholesale houses, for garages, for light industry such as the making of ice cream or pop, or for heavy industries such as repairing locomotives, meat packing, or oil refining.

The way we separate parts of a city so they can be used for what they are best suited is by zoning. A zone is simply an area set apart by law to be used in a certain way. It is like a room in a house for the community. When zones are carefully decided upon, and when the laws enforcing them are obeyed, it is possible to create an orderly and efficient community.

2. **Planning:** The procedure used to develop the best zones is known as town planning. This is the process of studying all phases of a community; its topographical features; the way the land is presently used; the population now and the population in the foreseeable future; the present location of industry and the likely industries that may come; the system of roads, bridges, sidewalks; utilities; the relationship of the city to the surrounding countryside, roads and industries; and the convenience and beauty of all parts of the community. When all these things have been studied, the professional planner of a city develops a general plan which indicates how that city can best be zoned for present and future development. Usually the future is limited to five or ten years because it is difficult to see clearly how a community will develop beyond this time.

When the plan or parts of the plan are complete, they are submitted to the City Council for approval. When they are approved, sometimes with modifications, then zoning by-laws and other regulations based on the plan come into force. This means that if someone wants to erect a store, he must put it on land set apart for the kind of store he wants to build—a neighborhood grocery, a downtown retail store, or a large shopping center. Similarly, he can only build a home on land set apart for residences.

In Edmonton, the following zones are provided for:

- (a) Public Parks District
- (b) One-family Dwelling District
- (c) Two-family Dwelling District
- (d) Three-storey Multiple Dwelling District
- (e) Six-storey Multiple Dwelling District
- (f) Local Business District
- (g) Three-storey Business District
- (h) Light Industrial District
- (i) General Business District
- (j) Heavy Industrial District
- (k) Agricultural District

A map of the city has been prepared, and on it the many districts are designated as belonging to one of these eleven classifications.

### 3. **Interim Development Control:**

There is always a delay between the time when a city decides that it is going to have a general plan to guide its zoning regulations and the time when the plan is finished. What happens to guide city growth during the interval? Can any person or company build just as he wants until the city is zoned? No. To control development in the meantime, the city passes an Interim Development By-law which says that all persons who want to erect a building or modify land

use in any way must submit their plans to the City for approval. The City Council, with the help of their own planning staff, consider each proposal to see if it fits in with the plan the City is developing. If it does, then permission is given to go ahead. If not, permission is not given. In this way the interim development of the city is controlled. Growth is orderly and in harmony with the general plan which is being prepared.

#### **4. City Redevelopment:**

Like houses, cities have to be remodelled as new problems arise. Some parts of a city may have been developed incorrectly. For example, during World War II, Edmonton City granted permission for the U.S. Army to extend a railroad into some unoccupied land for loading and unloading supplies. After the war the warehouses at the railhead were bought by several companies for offices and storage. Then when Edmonton began to grow rapidly, it was found this railhead was in the heart of some of the land desperately needed for residences. At considerable expense, the city relocated the businesses. Today the railhead has been replaced with a good residential district. In every city there are parts of the city which will someday need to be rebuilt. This process is called redevelopment. It is most strikingly seen in Toronto, New York City, and other centers where entire blocks of a slum district have been rebuilt with airy, clean apartment buildings surrounded by play space for children.

#### **5. What happens if a person or business does not like the zoning laws?**

Any person or agency whose purposes are thwarted by zoning by-law or an interim development order has the right of appeal. In larger cities like Edmonton, the appeal is to a special board known as the Interim Development Appeal Board. In other cities the appeal is direct to the City Council. If the person is still not satisfied, the appeal may be taken to the Zoning Appeal Board of the Province of Alberta. Both boards are made up of highly trained men—engineers, land surveyors, architects, real estate appraisers, lawyers, and others. Their job is to see that individuals, companies and communities are treated justly. In actual practice, few complaints reach the Provincial Board; most are settled satisfactorily by the City or the Interim Development Appeal Board.

#### **6. Planning and Zoning Means Intelligent Cooperation.**

Every citizen should watch how his community is growing and make suggestions to his aldermen and city planners. Ideas about how a community can be improved as it grows or is redeveloped need to come from all, young as well as old. Homes, schools, businesses, and industry all benefit when they are in the best place in the community. Roads, parks, playgrounds are most useful when they are well situated. Helping to build such a community is not the job of just the elected City Council or the town planning department, but of the people who live there as well.

In the remaining sections of the course some of the difficulties of community growth, traffic control and parking, subdividing land, housing, and allied problems, are studied. The person who knows something about these will be able to do better thinking about how his community should grow.

#### **Assignments:**

1. Find out what the zones are in your city. Plot them on a map.
2. Report to the class about, or place on a bulletin board, any articles or editorials from the local newspaper about problems of city growth. Look for such matters as reservation of park land, planning roads or bridges, permits to do business, re-zoning an area, deciding on a school site, building permits granted.
3. Write a short essay showing how zoning is to a community what rooms are to a home.
4. Have a discussion on parts of the city which now or in the future may need to be redeveloped.
5. Why is planning a cooperative task, involving the citizen, company, professional town planner and the city fathers? Discuss.

## **XII. How Does the City Control Traffic Flow and Parking?**

To attend a meeting in a building in North East Edmonton, one person left the south side of the city at 8:20 a.m. and proceeded by way of the Low-Level bridge. Another person called to the same meeting left Red Deer at 7:50 a.m. They arrived at their destination at the same time. The first person was caught in a traffic jam and seemed to move his car a few feet at a time as the minutes sped by. One sees the same problem at 5:10 p.m. Monday through Friday over the High Level Bridge in Edmonton, with cars bumper to bumper from the south end of the bridge north to the corner of Ninth Street and Jasper Avenue. One could find the same pattern probably in any city.

Traffic studies show that there are hourly peaks of traffic. These periods of heavy flow cause most traffic problems in cities. Primarily, most traffic is generated by the journey to work. One of the basic aims of good traffic planning, therefore, is to try to locate people within a reasonable distance of their places of work. Any journey to work taking over one hour is considered too long by most authorities. To further alleviate traffic congestion, authorities suggest that roads need to be specialized—some must be for heavy traffic, others merely local roads to service residential streets.

What can be done by planning authorities to resolve this traffic problem? Attention of course is paid primarily to safety and secondly to traffic flow. Some of the methods which are used are now described:

## 1. The Through Street.

Cars moving along such a street have the right-of-way. Stop signs are erected on all roads entering or crossing this street. The street may be designed to move vehicles quickly through a city.

### Assignments:

- (a) What advantage is gained by the through street? What difficulties are created by it?
- (b) Many stop signs are now being replaced by the sign "Yield Right of Way". How would you justify this change?

## 2. The Signal Light Corner.

The signals vary all the way from simple red, green, and amber, to a variety giving direction to turn allowed and directions to pedestrians.

### Assignments:

- (a) What is the purpose of the "amber" signal?
- (b) How is left-turn traffic handled at a busy intersection?
- (c) What difficulty does right-turn traffic encounter.
- (d) What advantage is served by the "scatter" corner? Does the pedestrian gain? Does the motorist?
- (e) Pupils should be paired or grouped to report on a variety of signal corners.

## 3. The four- or six-lane street.

### Assignments:

- (a) In which lane should you travel if you are planning a right turn? A left turn? Going along for many blocks?
- (b) What precautions are to be taken in changing from one lane to another?

## 4. The One-Way Street.

Avenues are often paired, one allowing east-bound traffic; and the next, west-bound traffic. North- and south-bound traffic would also travel on paired streets.

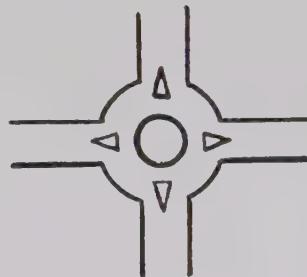
### Assignments:

- (a) How would a merchant feel if one-way traffic were arranged for past his place of business?
- (b) Merchants have reported a drop-off in business when the one-way street was adopted, but that in time business was regained and eventually increased beyond the original level. How can this be accounted for?



## 5. The Traffic Circle:

The traffic circle is found at times to be more satisfactory than the stop light signals at a corner. This is especially true when more than four roads intersect.



### Assignments:

- (a) What sign does one encounter when approaching a traffic circle?
- (b) Does the traffic circle handle through traffic? Does it allow for right turns? Left turns? U-turns?
- (c) If you were planning traffic, what factors would determine whether you would use the signal-light or the traffic circle?

## 6. The Clover-Leaf

The clover-leaf, though very expensive, is the most effective device known for maintaining fast traffic flow at a four-way intersection. Provided motorists follow their proper lanes, any direction may be taken at the intersection without slacking speed. Basic to the structure is the overpass and underpass for through traffic. Variations of the true clover-leaf are made to meet the requirements at the intersection.

### Assignments:

- (a) Trace the path of the car making the right-hand turn at a clover-leaf intersection. The path of the car making the left-hand turn.
- (b) The simple underpass, or subway, is used to cross the railroad lines. Can the class agree where the next one should be built in your city?

## 7. Parking—parallel, angle, no parking, etc.

### Assignments:

- (a) What advantages are gained, and lost, when angle-parking is changed to parallel parking?
- (b) Why does the city government find it necessary to order "no parking" along whole city blocks in the city center?
- (c) What purposes are served by the use of parking meters?

(d) How is business affected by the parking restrictions found necessary? What steps are business firms taking to meet the parking problem?

## 8. The Traffic Count.

Basic to planning for traffic needs is the traffic count. Electrical devices are used to determine the number of cars passing a certain point. The result of the count is that roads may be widened or made one-way streets. Signals may be installed, a traffic circle laid out, and so on.

### Assignments:

- (a) Groups could be assigned to make traffic counts at various points, and the effectiveness of devices in use could be discussed in view of the findings.
- (b) Contrary to popular opinion, the taxi driver is a very competent driver. He enjoys a low insurance rate, and yet must travel with considerable speed to make the most efficient use of his capital investment and time. What are some of the tricks or methods the "cabbie" uses in his work?
- (c) Prepare a class scrap book of pictures showing parking of cars and how traffic flow is maintained in your city. The book could include pictures of traffic jams indicating that improvement is needed.
- (d) Editorials, letters to the editor, reports from meetings of the City Council can be found dealing with immediate traffic or parking problems. These problems and the proposed solutions could be discussed in class, from the viewpoint of the motorist, the pedestrian, the city transportation system, and the businessman who would be affected.

## XIII. How Is A New Subdivision Planned?

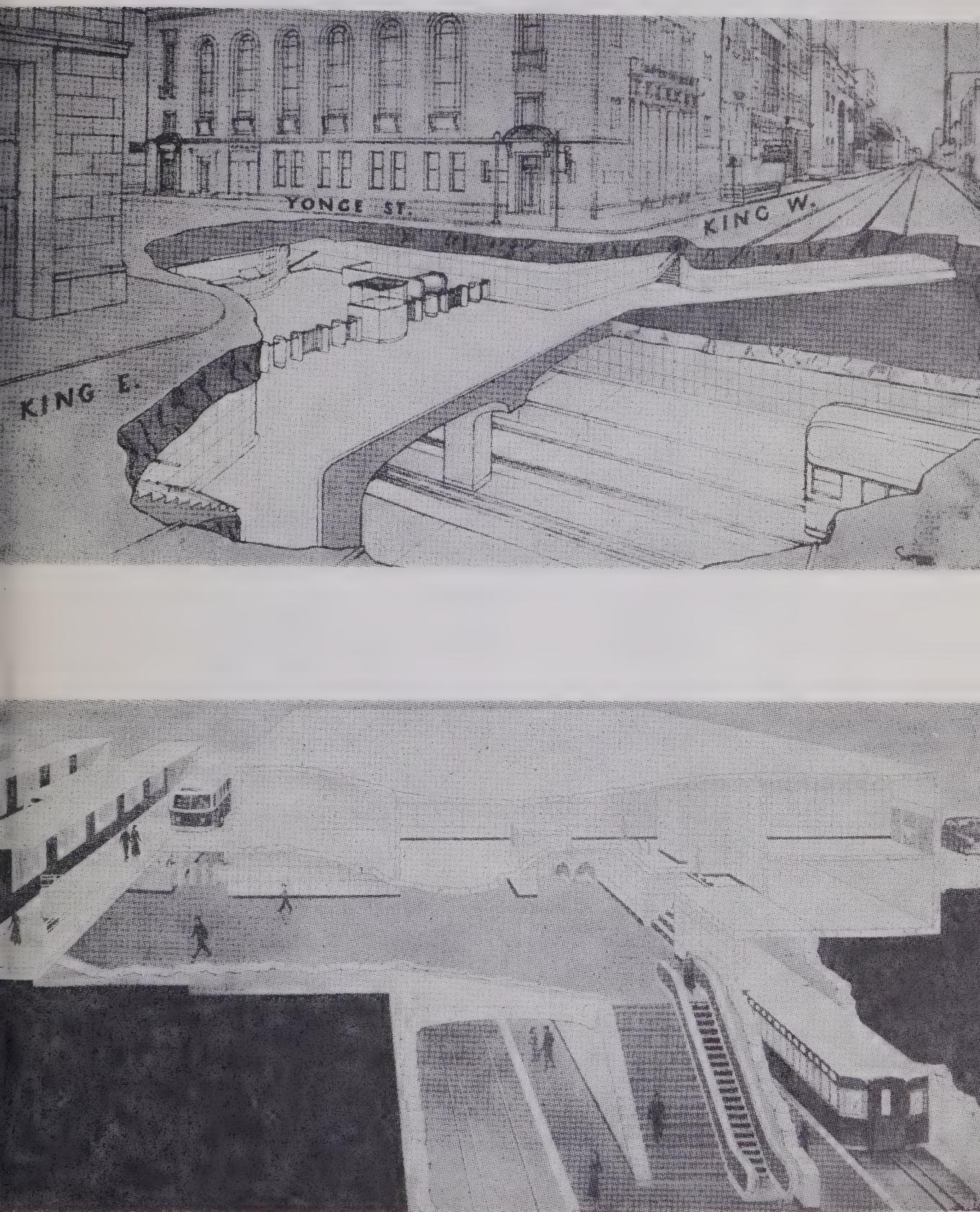
If you had control of a large block of land in a city, how would you use and sub-divide that land? Would you zone it for business, industry or residences? If for residences, what type of roads and streets would you map out? What provision would you make for schools, churches, stores, industry, agriculture, apartment blocks, and for parks? We must in our planning avoid as far as possible all the weaknesses which we have observed developing in older sections of our city.

In Edmonton there existed, prior to 1950, a block of land known as the Sherbrooke District, sub-divided in the traditional "grid" pattern. A few homes had already been built therein, but not sufficient to make impossible a re-planning of the area. Under the direction of the City Planner at the time the area was re-planned.

The two plans are shown on the next pages\*. Plan A is the original sub-division with reservations of blocks for various purposes

\* The plans which follow and the statistics are through courtesy of Canadian Bank of Commerce, from their **Commercial Letter** of October, 1955. Also through courtesy of Community Planning Association of Canada.

DIAGRAM OF TORONTO SUBWAY



based on the zoning by-laws of the time. Plan B is the sub-division as it was eventually developed, as an "integrated neighborhood" which is planned to provide the essential services and facilities which the people living in the area will require.

### UNPLANNED SCHEME



Sherbrooke District, EDMONTON, Alberta . . . the unplanned residential area as proposed in 1949

1. There is a complete absence of parks and recreation areas.
2. No church sites are provided.
3. Shopping areas are small and located on the perimeter instead of being central. No off-street parking is provided.
4. Only one school site is provided, and it is not centrally located.
5. All roads are of equal width and are potential "through" streets.
6. There is no variety in types of residential zones.
7. Some very long, narrow house lots are shown. These are uneconomical. Others are poorly shaped.
8. There is an unnecessary duplication of utility lanes in some places.
9. There are variations in the width of the main road. Half-jogs in the roads in some places are unsafe, and there are some dangerous junctions.
10. The light industrial zone has no place in a residential area.
11. Likewise the agricultural zone seems out of place, especially with houses allowed in it in excess of a ratio appropriate to such a zone.
12. Residential zones are all 1-family.

## PLANNED SCHEME



and as finally developed, starting in 1952

1. Sites are provided for parks, playing fields and recreational areas.
2. Church sites are provided in convenient locations.
3. There is a central shopping area, with off-street parking.
4. Two school sites are provided, reasonably accessible from all parts of the neighbourhood. The Catholic school is off-centre because it also serves adjacent neighbourhoods.
5. "Through" arterial highways, of adequate width, are separated from local service roads by limited access planted strips. Thus both "local" and "through" traffic are safeguarded. There are feeder roads for bus routes. Local residential streets are designed

in such a way to discourage "through" driving, yet remain adequate for local purposes.

6. At the corners of the area, there are intersections designed to keep "through" traffic moving.
7. One-family housing is created in an aesthetic as well as functional setting. Set-backs are arranged to allow for a "rhythmic variation". A buffer strip separates housing from an adjacent industrial zone.
8. There are also apartments and row housing in a variety of types.
9. A neighbourhood "focus" of larger buildings and open space is included as an essential ingredient of a well-designed residential area.

## COMPARATIVE STATISTICS

	UNPLANNED SCHEME		PLANNED SCHEME	
Internal Roads	37,960 lin. ft.	57.2 acres	27,600 lin. ft.	41.7 acres
Utility and Service Lanes	27,460 lin. ft.	12.6 acres	23,400 lin. ft.	10.7 acres
Public School Space		2.14 acres		6. acres
Catholic School Space		—		4. acres
Recreation League Area		—		2. acres
Parks		—		4. acres
Churches		—		1.5 acres
Shopping Area(s)	(scattered)	1.9 acres		1.5 acres
Agricultural Zone		19. acres		—
Light Industry		6.56 acres		—
Miscellaneous (planted islands, etc.)		—		11.6 acres
Residential			896 units	112. acres
I-Family Type	1,068 units	122.6 acres	3,584 people	
Row Housing	3,400 people	—	245 units	17.5 acres
	—	—	980 people	
Apartment Type	—	—	190 units	9.5 acres
			760 people	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,068 units</b>	<b>122.6 acres</b>	<b>1,331 units</b>	<b>139. acres</b>

	UNPLANNED SCHEME	PLANNED SCHEME
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE OF SCHEME</b>	<b>222 ACRES</b>	<b>222 ACRES</b>
<b>TOTAL POPULATION (residential)</b>	<b>3,400 PEOPLE</b>	<b>5,324 PEOPLE</b>
<b>GROSS DENSITY</b> (i.e. total no. of dwelling units divided by total acreage of scheme)	<b>4.8 dwelling units/acre</b>	<b>5.7 dwelling units/acre</b>
<b>NET RESIDENTIAL DENSITY</b> (i.e. total no. of dwelling units or persons divided by total acreage of residential property and the roads and lanes which serve them)	<b>26 persons/acre</b>	<b>27 persons/acre</b>
	<b>6.27 units/acre</b>	<b>7 units/acre</b>

### Assignments:

1. Which plan provides better for the housing needs of the people? In what ways?
2. Which plan provides better for through traffic and for safety of motorist and of pedestrian?
3. Which plan provides better for the "shopping" needs of the residents? In what ways?
4. How do the school sites compare (a) in location, (b) in area? The Separate School site, though not central, is strategically located. Can you give the reason?
5. Plan B makes provision for church sites. What advantage is there in planning these sites in advance? How would the sites be allocated among the various denominations.
6. Are the park and recreation areas provided in Plan B really necessary? Are they sufficient in area? Are they located for fullest advantage to be taken of them?
7. What lots in Plan A might you not like to purchase, and for what reasons? Are there lots with these disadvantages in Plan B?
8. In which plan would it be easier for a stranger to locate a given address?
9. Plan B makes no provision for light industry or agriculture. Discuss whether this is a weakness or a strength of the plan.
10. A man with a family has recently been transferred to Edmonton by his employing firm. In what ways does Plan B better meet his immediate needs than does Plan A?
11. When Plan B was proposed it was argued that it would encourage the development of a neighborhood with a better community spirit. What factors in Plan B would tend to encourage this development?
12. Five of fifty of the original homes had to be moved as a result of the re-planning. Should owners be compelled to do this? Who should stand the expense?
13. To the north of this "neighborhood" is an industrial area. How is the neighborhood separated, or protected, from the inevitable unaesthetic aspects to the north?

### XIV. What Economic Aspects Are Involved In Changes?

In support of Plan B it is contended that there is financial gain for the city as a whole. Supporting this contention, Mr. Dant\* points out that: "a considerable reduction in the lengths of both local streets and service lanes was possible, saving home-owners of the City many dollars of unnecessary street construction and maintenance cost. The land so saved was put into more fruitful use, adding to total investments and providing the City with increased real estate tax year by year. There were some slight increases in utility

\* Former Edmonton Town Planner.

costs, as compared with the 'unplanned' scheme; and some added costs in curved curbing, but these were far outweighed by the above savings.

"Perhaps the greatest saving is in the difficulties and expense to home-owners and tax-payers which, in the absence of such a subdivision plan, arise over the years as a result of failure to provide suitable sites for schools, churches, shops and play space, as well as safe traffic conditions."\*\*

#### Assignments:

1. Plan B is considered preferable to Plan A "from the viewpoint of economics, appearance, convenience and safety". In what order of importance would you rank these factors?
2. (a) Write an essay on the topic, "Planning a New Subdivision". Your essay might develop the four points listed in question one. It might also make some mention of the need for "neighborhood" or social possibilities.  
(b) Draw the layout for a subdivision of your own design.
3. How would the following institutions or organizations become established in this new subdivision: A church? A skating rink and community center? A school? A home and school association? Would any service club establish itself in this community? Would the above organizations be sufficient to meet the needs of each resident? Their needs for recreation? Their spiritual needs? Their need for belonging to a social group? Their need for entertainment?
4. Possibly there is in your city a planned subdivision such as Sherbrooke. Can you get information on it to see how it has developed physically and socially?

#### XV. How is Adequate Housing Made Possible in Canada?

When people from farms, villages and towns flocked to the cities and Canadian military bases during World War II there was an acute shortage of houses and of rooms and apartments. Under its wartime emergency powers the Dominion of Canada took two kinds of action. In the first place it made laws controlling the price of rent. This rental control protected war-time industrial workers and servicemen's families from an undue increase in the cost of rent because of excessive competition for limited accommodation. However, rental control did not solve the problem and was later abolished.

The second action the Federal Government took was to pass the National Housing Act (N.H.A.). Canada had emerged from the depression of the 1930's with relatively few new houses built. At the same time, the numbers of families were increasing rapidly as more and more young people married. Therefore, after a great deal of study, the Dominion Government passed The National Housing Act in 1944 to help meet the housing emergency by providing for government-guaranteed loans which would make many people able to afford to build houses. As a result of this Act, construction of houses

\*\* Commercial Letter, Canadian Bank of Commerce, October, 1955.

in Canada increased rapidly. However, although the extreme housing shortage of World War II days no longer exists in Canada, there still has been a continuing lag in the number of houses and apartments available for the number of people who need them, and therefore Canada still has a serious housing shortage.

Today, providing Canadians with adequate housing is a large-scale co-operative undertaking. It involves first of all the individual citizen and his family, who must say what kind of housing they desire, and who must spend a sixth to a third of their income to pay for it. Then there is the builder who constructs the house or apartment. Either he or some other person or company must put out the money to pay for the land, labor and materials, and must take the financial risks until the building is sold to a buyer or begins producing revenue from rentals. The large amounts of money required to finance housing must come either from the large companies who have great sums to invest, or from governments with the power to raise large amounts through taxation.

The National Housing Act recognizes (1) that Canada needs many kinds of housing, (2) that many persons and companies must work together to provide housing on a vast scale, (3) that great sums of money are required, (4) and that Canada needs sound knowledge and education about the nature of good housing and community planning. The Act provides for the establishment of machinery which would meet the above four needs.

To administer the Act, an agency called Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation was created as a government company. It has headquarters at Ottawa. In addition, it has five regional, and twenty-nine branch offices across the country. The activities of the Corporation include the following:

1. Home-ownership loans are arranged between the buyer of a house and lending institutions like mortgage companies and life insurance companies. The money is paid back in monthly installments, usually for a period of 20 years.
2. Rental housing loans, which are also paid back in monthly installments, are arranged between lending institutions and builders or investors. Special loans are made to housing companies which will erect homes or apartments to be rented at low cost to meet the needs of people with low incomes.
3. Loans are made to industries engaged in mining, lumbering, logging or fishing for the erection of housing for their employees.
4. Loans are made to farm owners for housing improvement.
5. Loans are made to home owners who need to remodel or enlarge their homes.
6. C.M.H.C. may unite with a province and a municipality to buy large tracts of land near cities which are needed for housing purposes.

7. Grants are made to cities which need assistance in clearing away, replanning, and modernizing of slum areas, and in caring for the people who need to be rehabilitated during slum clearance.
8. C.M.H.C. may join with any provincial government in providing publicly-owned housing where it is needed, usually for the less privileged dwellers of cities who need help in getting a decent place to live.
9. C.M.H.C. also engages in and supports research in housing and community planning. It also has sponsored a national citizen's educational organization called the Community Planning Association of Canada.

### **Assignments:**

1. Discuss the relationship between good housing and good neighborhoods, under the following headings: 1) Protection; 2) Content; 3) Air and light; 4) Services; 5) Character.
2. Describe how Canadians attempt to provide themselves with adequate housing. How does The National Housing Act make possible a nation-wide attack on the housing shortage? Why is the solution of the housing problem a co-operative endeavor between home-owners, builders, financiers and government? Why is the C.M.H.C. so interested in having homes and neighborhoods well located and well designed?
3. Report on the terms of a home improvement loan made by a bank and backed by C.M.H.C. You may get from your local chartered bank a leaflet describing the terms of such a loan.
4. If there is a branch office of C.M.H.C. in your city, a student may be assigned to visit the office, invite an official to visit your school and explain to your class the Corporation's work in your local community.
5. Design a home for your neighborhood, paying attention to protection, content, air and light, services, and character, both of the house and of the neighborhood.

## **XVI. What Other Problems Related to Housing and City Growth Exist?**

### **1. Securing Additional Land Needed for Housing Developments and City Growth:**

In this period of rapid growth, city governments have been faced with many problems. One of these has been the need to secure additional land to provide for growth. Both Calgary and Edmonton have had to annex land for both housing and development and industrial sites. Besides annexing land, cities have a further problem in that land outside the city limits develops in an uncontrolled fashion.

### **2. Financing Housing Developments and Community Services:**

While N.H.A. takes care of housing costs, the cost of providing for the extension of water, sewer and light service, for providing

schools and streets imposes a financial burden on local governments.

To help municipal governments with these services, the provincial government has developed a number of devices for sharing the costs. Among these are school and hospital grants, a crown corporation which lends money for long terms at reduced rates of interest to towns and cities, and a provision for declaring undeveloped areas or developed with peculiar problems of expansion as "New Towns" which are eligible for increased assistance.

### **3. Population Changes:**

There has been a rapid increase in the number of children since World War II. This increase has necessitated an expansion of school facilities and has thus burdened local governments with further heavy expenses. An illustration of this increase can be seen in the case of Jasper Place, where in 1952, 25% of the total population was in schools and another 25% was under school age.

There has also been an increase in the numbers of elderly people. Local governments are faced with the problem of providing, for many of these people, housing adapted to their age, health, and economic circumstances.

The migratory nature of the population makes it difficult to plan for growth. Within cities, on the average, one in five families moves each year to a new address. About one in twenty families moves each year from one province to another. The amount of movement from rural areas, villages and towns to the cities is very great as well.

### **4. Personnel Problems:**

There is an acute shortage of trained and professional people such as doctors, dentists, teachers, clergy, nurses and other persons whose services are necessary in communities. Engineers, architects, town planners, skilled workmen for construction, and even semi-skilled and unskilled workers have been in short supply.

### **5. Developing Community Organizations in New City Areas:**

Community leagues, home and schools, a neighborhood Y.M.C.A., Scout organizations, churches and other organizations which make community life richer are slow in starting in many parts of the city. The urgent need is for community leaders, male and female, who can take time from business and home for this form of service.

#### **Assignments:**

1. Make a scrapbook or bulletin board display of activities, charts and pictures which show the variety of problems faced by growing cities.
2. Discuss the problems related to planning and growth that your neighborhood is experiencing at the present time. What attempts could be made to solve them? What contributions could students from this school make toward solving some of these problems?

3. In many of our cities, locating schools to serve neighborhood units is a problem. Discuss the problem of finding sites for (a) an elementary school, (b) a separate elementary school, (c) a junior high school, (d) a senior high school. Does the location of your school stimulate or retard community activity?
4. How did your community or neighborhood finance (a) its school, (b) its water and sewer system, (c) its recreation facilities, (4) its roads, sidewalks and curbing, (5) its local shopping facilities? How were your parents involved in each of these projects?
5. Describe the population changes in your community or neighborhood that influence its daily life and its development as a place in which to live enjoyably.

## XVII. Conclusion

The city must be more than a collection of buildings and people. It must be a place where people can live happily, in physical and mental good health. Our study should have indicated that serious problems can arise in a city if it is allowed to "grow like Topsy". Recently, excellent work has been done toward planning the development and renovation of our Alberta cities. It is a slow process, especially in the older sections where buildings must be allowed to serve out their normal life. However, gradually the faces of our cities will change.

But will these changes improve our cities? Will our cities be better places in which to earn a living, to raise a family, to get an education, to worship, to keep well and safe, to enjoy leisure? The answer depends both on the present generation of adults and on the generation of youth now in school.

### Assignments:

1. How can adults in our society help shape the growth and development of cities?
2. To what extent should a business or industry be interested in the quality of the city where it is located?
3. What can the present generation of youth do to prepare themselves for guiding city development as adults?
4. What can the present generation of youth do to influence the growth of cities beneficially now?
5. Canada is rapidly becoming an urbanized nation. What opportunities for adventure and pioneering does this hold for youth? How has this unit contributed to your understanding of city problems and city development? How could the unit have been made more effective as far as you are concerned?



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